

III. REMARKS

Claims 1-20 are pending in this application. By this Response, Applicant provisionally elects Group I, claims 1-7, with traverse. Prompt examination on the merits is respectfully requested.

With regard to the Restriction Requirement, MPEP § 803 states:

There are two criteria for a proper requirement for restriction between patentably distinct inventions:

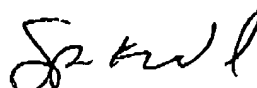
(A) The inventions must be independent (see MPEP § 802.01, § 806.04, § 808.01) or distinct as claimed (see MPEP § 806.05 - § 806.05(i)); and

(B) There must be a serious burden on the examiner if restriction is required (see MPEP § 803.02, § 806.04(a) - § 806.04(i), § 808.01(a), and § 808.02).

Turning to the second element of MPEP § 803, Applicant submits that the Office fails to prove that a serious burden exists relative to the separation of Group I from Group II. In the Restriction Requirement, the Office does not even assert that a serious burden exists. A restriction is not warranted simply because Group I and Group II are in different classifications. Applicant respectfully submits that there is no serious burden relative to the separation of Group I from Group II, because a search and/or understanding of group I inherently (necessarily) involves the search and/or understanding of Group II.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the Restriction Requirement between Groups I and II. Should the Examiner require anything further from Applicants, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's undersigned representative at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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